

# Embellishment

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Embellishment is to change, add to, or take away from an existing fabric. This enables you to add unique and decorative treatments to a garment or home decorating project. There are many techniques that you could use. This packet illustrates only a few of the many possibilities. Let your imagination go and try to spark your creativity.

## Suggested resources:

1. Encyclopedia of Sewing Machine Techniques  
Nancy Bednar and JoAnn Pugh-Gannon  
Sterling Publishing Co., Inc. NY  
ISBN-13: 978-1-4027-4293-4
2. Embellishment; A to Z  
Stephanie Valley  
The Taunton Press, Inc CT  
ISBN 1-56158-307-3

# Embellishment

A few items make your embellishment techniques easier to do.

## 1. Stabilizers:

There are four basic types of stabilizers

1. Cut-away
2. Tear-away
3. Heat-away
4. Wash-away

The stabilizer you choose will depend on your fabric, the nature of the embroidery design or technique, and the end use of the product.

There are so many different products and brands that it is good to do some experimenting before doing a major project.

Cut-away stabilizers are a good choice for embroidering or knit fabrics. Use a permanent cut-away to keep the fabric smooth during the technique and it will help prevent stretching.

Tear-away stabilizers are temporary stabilizers that are generally easy to remove, but be careful to do so without pulling or stretching the fabric. Some products tear more easily than others, so check this when testing a stabilizer. Also note that some tear better in one direction than the other.

Heat-away stabilizers are used when the fabric is too delicate for a tear-away, or too sheer for a cut-away, or the fabric is not washable. There are two types of heat-away stabilizers: woven and plastic-like firm.

Wash-away stabilizers are designed to dissolve when wet and come in several forms: plastic-like film and soluble and soluble paper.

## Stabilizers at a glance

Stabilizers	Use for	Best used on	Come in	removal
Cut-away stabilizers	Permanent support	Knits, loosely wovens	Light to heavy weights	Not removed, except for cutting away excess

Tear-away stabilizers	Temporary support	Firmly woven, natural fabrics	Light weight to heavy weights: fusible and nonfusible	Torn away, but not always completely removable
Heat-away stabilizers	Temporary support	Non washable, delicate fabrics and for off-the edge stitching techniques	Woven sheets, plastic film	Completely removable with iron and much caution
Wash-away stabilizers	Temporary support (spray starch can be used if sprayed on some fabrics several times)	Delicate, mesh-like, and difficult-to-mark fabrics; also for cutwork and embroidered appliques	Plastic firm, paper sheets; brush-on or spray able liquid	Completely removable with water

# Applique

Methods of appliqué:

1. Basic fused
2. Reverse
3. Padded
4. Shadow

Materials needed:

1. Pattern for cutout design
  2. Fabric
  3. Thread
  4. Fusing materials
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Machine needle:

Universal -- new

Use one of the patterns provided and follow the simple instructions to making the design.

## 1. Basic Fused applique:

1. Prepare a paper template of the design--make a copy for each piece you plan to use
2. Cut a piece of fusible web, larger than the design
3. Press the non paper side of the fusible web to the wrong side of the applique fabric
4. Place the template wrong side up, on the fusible web's paper backing. Using a chalk marker or no. 2 pencil, trace the design onto the paper.
5. Cut out the appliqué design
6. Remove the paper backing from the fusible web. position the applique on the right side of the base fabric. Fuse the appliqué into place, following the manufacturer's instructions.
7. Cut a piece of tear-away stabilizer larger than the applique. Position the stabilizer under the base fabric. Pin in place.
8. Place the embroidery foot on the sewing machine. Thread the needle with embroidery thread, and use bobbin in the bobbin.
9. Sew the machine for a narrow short zigzag.
10. Stitch around the design
11. Remove the tear-away stabilizer.

## 1. Reverse

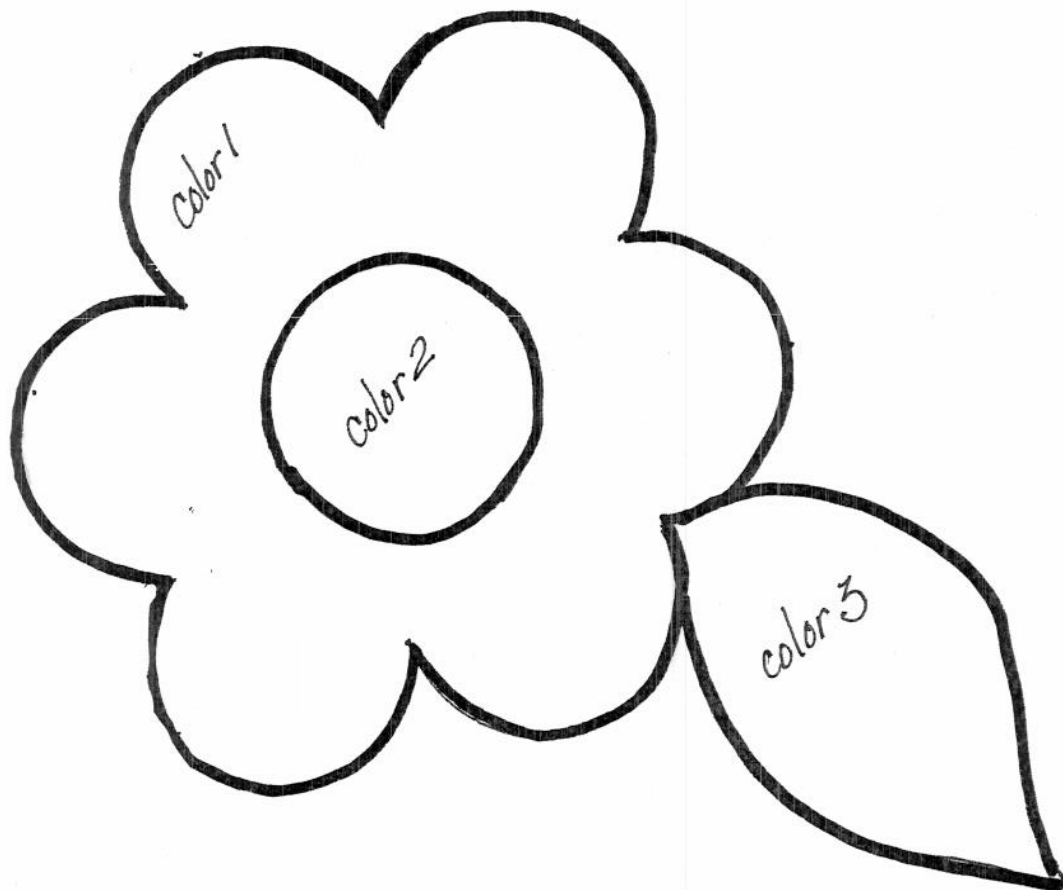
1. Prepare a paper template of the design
2. Place the template, wrong side down on the right side of the base fabric  
Trace around the design
3. Cut a piece of tear-away stabilizer and a piece of applique fabric slight larger than the design

4. With right side up, center the applique fabric and stabilizer under the traced design. Pin the layers together.
5. Place the embroidery foot on the machine. Thread the needle with embroidery thread, and use Bobbinfil in the bobbin
6. Set the machine for a narrow short zigzag. Stitch along the traced on stitching lines
7. With right side up, use applique scissors to cut away the base fabric from inside the stitching lines
8. Set the machine for a wider satin stitch and zigzag the stitching lines again
9. Trim away extra applique fabric, remove stabilizer

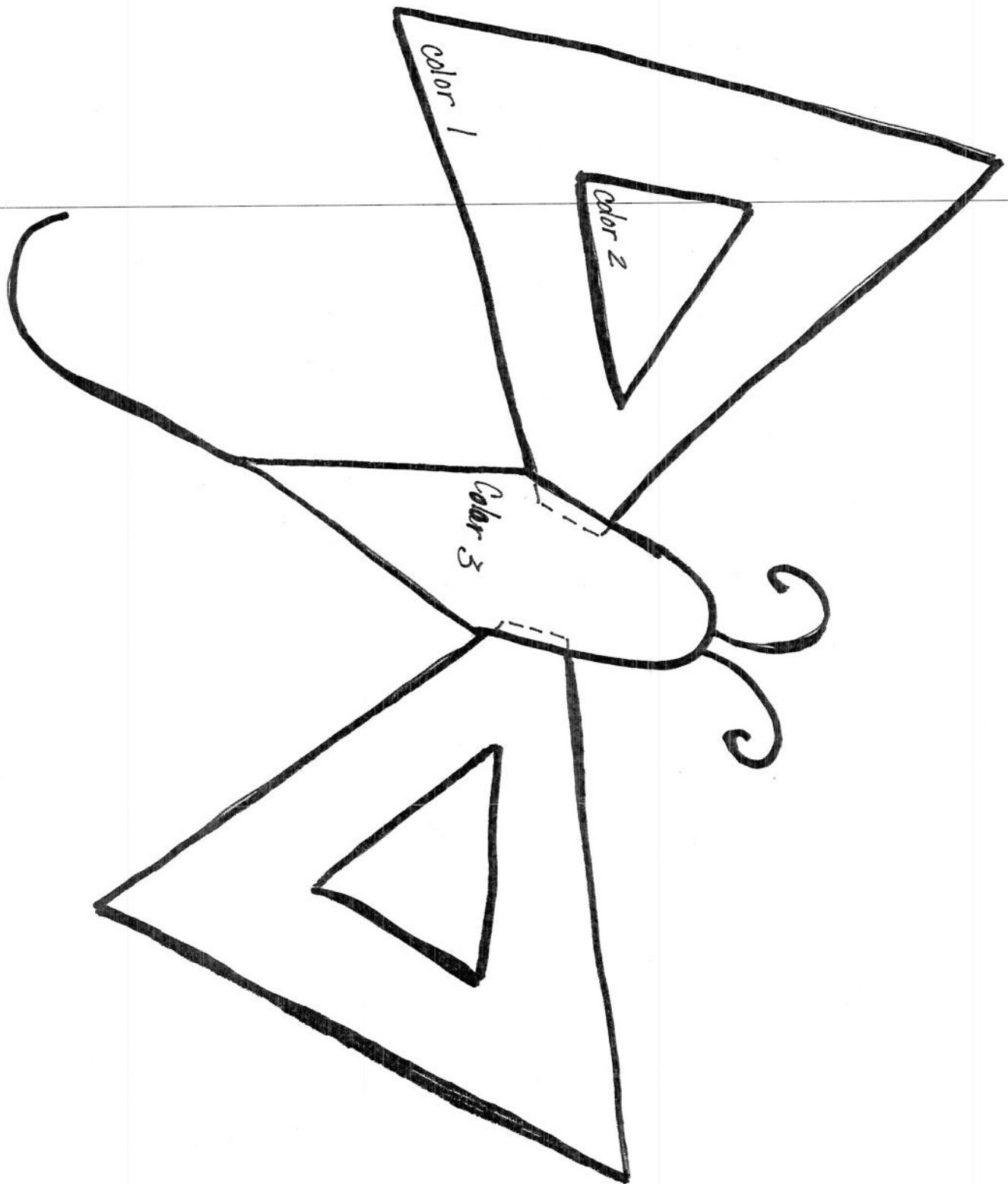
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Possible patterns:

### Use of machine blanket stitch



Use of machine satin stitch



## Bias Ruffles

Ruffles can be used as a finish for an edge or can be sewn to the fabric to cover the surface.

Materials needed:

1. Ruler
2. Rotary cutter
3. Gathering foot or pleater

Instructions:

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1. Determine how wide you want the ruffle, double it, add seam allowances
2. Cut all strips of fabric on the bias
3. Sew all strips together using a  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch seam
4. Press seams open
5. Press strips in half lengthwise
6. Pin raw edges together
7. Baste the raw edges together
8. Put on the gathering foot or pleater
9. Insert the raw edge side of the fabric into the foot and begin to stitch using a basting stitch
10. Your strips are ready to use

## Couching

Decorative threads, ribbons, yarns, and trims can be attached to fabric by couching over them with a variety of machine stitches

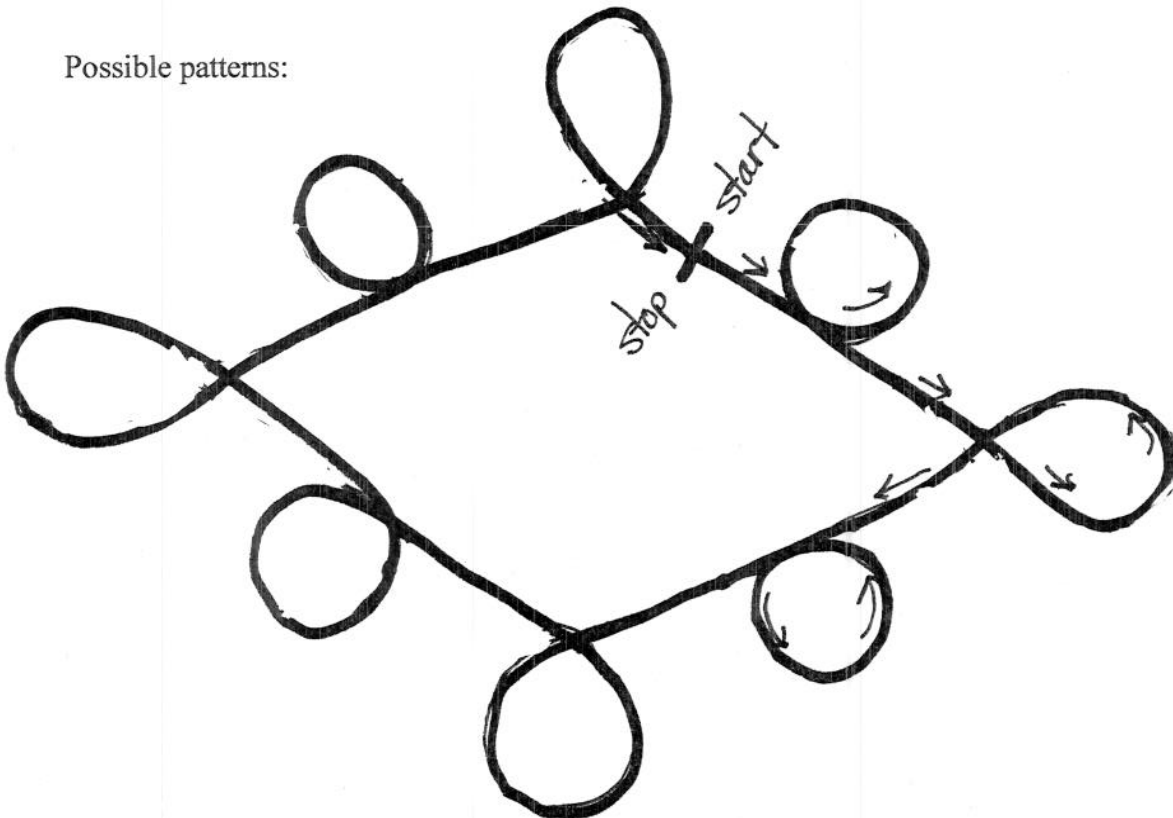
Materials needed:

1. Chalk marker
2. Decorative threads, cords, or ribbons
3. Braiding or cording foot
4. Thread
5. New sharp Universal machine needle
6. Standard zigzag foot

Directions:

1. Using a chalk marker, trace a stitching line or design onto the right side of the fabric.
2. Cut a piece of tear-away stabilizer slightly larger than the design. Position the stabilizer under the design on the fabric. Pin in place.
3. Insert the decorative thread through the opening in the foot.
4. Select a stitch and adjust the width to cover the decorative thread.
5. Remove the stabilizer.
6. If you are following a design motif or not ending in a seam use a large-eye hand needle to pull the ends to the wrong side of the fabric, knot the ends, trim.

Possible patterns:



# Block Printing

Materials needed:

1. Fabric
2. Rubber stamp or foam craft form stamp
3. Fabric paint or dye

Instructions:

1. Wash fabric before using it
  2. Press fabric
  3. Stretch out on a flat surface
  4. Dip stamp in a shallow surface of paint/dye or brush on with a paint brush
  5. Stamp on fabric--hold firm and try not to rock back and forth
  6. Allow paint/dye to dry
  7. Heat set with a hot iron
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## Crinkling

Crinkling is a simple method for adding surface texture to the fabric.

Materials needed:

1. Cotton string
2. Panty hose foot area
3. Lightweight fusible interfacing
4. Fabric to be crinkled

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Instructions:

1. Determine the amount of desired finished crinkled fabric. Add extra length and width to allow for the crinkling process.
2. Submerge the fabric in lukewarm water until thoroughly saturated.
3. Remove the fabric and squeeze out the excess water.
4. Fold the fabric in half lengthwise several times until it forms a narrow strip.
5. Twist the ends of the strip in opposite directions. The fabric should form a tight roll and begin to curl onto itself.
6. Continue twisting until the fabric rolls and forms a ball.
7. Secure the ball with cotton string. Tuck the ends of the fabric into the ball.
8. Place the secured ball into the toe of an old pair of pantyhose; know the open end.
9. Place the fabric ball in the drawer along with several towels to buffer the noise and absorb the moisture. Tumble in a warm dryer until all moisture has evaporated.
10. Remove the pantyhose and string from the ball and unwind the fabric.
11. Place the crinkled fabric right side down on a pressing surface.
12. Stretch the fabric to the desired size, and pin in place.
13. Cut interfacing the size needed. Place the fusible side of the interfacing down on the crinkled fabric.
14. Fuse into place following the manufacturer's instructions

## Cutwork

Cutwork is an embroidery technique that involves trimming away sections of a design that have been outlined with a satin stitch.

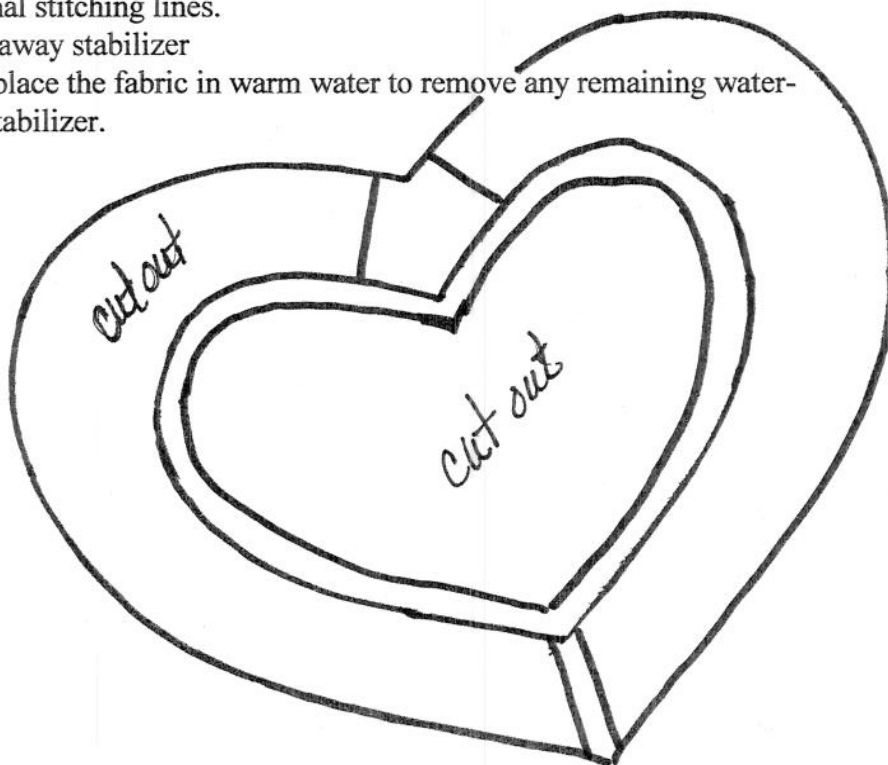
Materials needed:

1. Template
2. Water-soluble stabilizer
3. Tear-away stabilizer
4. Water soluble marker
5. Thread
6. Applique scissors
7. Open toe embroidery foot
8. Fabric

Instructions:

1. Cut a piece of water-soluble stabilizer, tear-away stabilizer, and secondary fabric slightly larger than the design
2. Trace the design onto the water-soluble stabilizer
3. Sandwich the secondary fabric in between the tear-way stabilizer and the wrong side of the base fabric.
4. Place the water-soluble stabilizer on the top of the right of the base fabric. Pin all four layers of fabric and stabilizer together.
5. Use a regular straight stitch and stitch along all the design lines.
6. With the right side of the base fabric facing up, use applique scissors to trim away the base fabric leaving the under fabric exposed.
7. Add the open-toe embroider foot. Set machine on a satin stitch and stitch over the original stitching lines.
8. Remove tear-away stabilizer
9. If necessary, place the fabric in warm water to remove any remaining water-soluble stabilizer.

Possible patterns:



## Embossing

Embossing is a technique for imprinting a design or texture into a pile fabric, such as velvet or velveteen. Rayon-blend velvets reveal the most visible impressions.

Materials needed:

1. Rayon-blend fabric
  2. Rubber fabric stamp
  3. Spray bottle filled with water
  4. Optional: metal kitchen tools
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Instructions:

1. Cut a piece of velvet to desired finished size.
2. Preheat the iron to medium high temperature.
3. Place the rubber stamp right side up on the ironing board.
4. Place the velvet pile side down on top of the stamp.
5. Spritz the back of the velvet with water.
6. Press the iron firmly over the stamp for approximately 20 seconds. Move the iron as little as possible.
7. Lift the iron and velvet from the stamp.
8. Reposition the velvet and repeat the embossing as desired.
9. Can use metal cooling rack, washers, bolts, etc. and do steps 3 to 8.

## Dye Fabric

### Sprinkle with rock salt

Materials needed:

1. Cotton fabric
2. Rock salt
3. Fabric dye
4. Rubber gloves to protect your hands from color

Instructions:

1. Wet fabric--squeeze out excess water
2. Spray on fabric dye or dip fabric in fabric dye
3. Squeeze out excess dye when dipped in
4. Lay flat on an old towel or white butcher paper
5. Sprinkle rock salt on the dye area
6. Let sit until fabric dries
7. Rinse
8. Heat set the dye into the fabric

Note: the finish will look like crystals that form on windows in the winter time.

## Faux Chenille

Faux chenille is a stitching and slashing technique using several layers of fabric. All are sewn together and all are cut except the bottom layer. It is best to stitch on the bias of the fabrics. This will let it fray to create the chenille, but will not unravel excessively. Rayon and natural fabrics produce the best results.

### Materials needed:

1. 4 to 7 layers of fabric--each time to rearrange the fabrics you will get a different color and print design.
2. Water-soluble marker or chalk
3. Walking foot
4. Sharp scissors or strips of Omine board an a sharp rotary cutter

### Instructions:

1. Select four to seven fabrics to create the chenille.
2. Stack on top of each other, placing wrong side of fabric to the right side of the next fabric.
3. Mark a diagonal line on a 45degree angle to the straight of grain and continue to mark more lines to cover the surface
4. Pin all thickness together
5. Stitch the line using the walking foot
6. Space between lines--best if not more than ½ inch apart
7. Stitch next line
8. Continue until all lines are stitched
9. Cut all but the bottom layer of fabric
10. Wash and tumble dry OR spray with water and brush surface to create the chenille

## Fringing

Fringe is a decorative loose or frayed edging that can be applied to garments, home decorating projects, and craft projects. Two methods are: self fringe or yarn/ribbon fringe.

Materials needed:

1. Self fringe: loosely woven fabric
2. Ribbon/yarn fringe: ribbon, yarn, etc. and a base fabric to sew it to

Instructions:

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Self fringe

1. Determine the desired finished length of the fringe
2. Set the sewing machine for a short, narrow zigzag stitch
3. Stitch along the marked line for the width of the fringe
4. Gently remove the cross threads from the fringe area

Ribbon/yarn fringe

1. Finish the edge of the base fabric
2. Determine the desired finished length of the fringe
3. Cut the ribbons, thread, cord, etc. to twice the desired finished length of fringe
4. Cut 5 to 6 inch pieces of transparent tape
5. Line up the cut pieces of thread, yarn, ribbon in a straight row. Place the tape down the center of the row
6. Repeat the process until enough fringe is created
7. With right side of base fabric up, place the fringe with the tape strips sticky side down along the finished edge of the fabric.
8. Set the sewing machine for a short straight stitch. Stitch through the center of the tape, inside the finished edge. Add additional strips of fringe to complete the project.
9. Gently remove the tape
10. Arrange the fringe so both ends fall away from the fabric.
11. Press and trim as necessary

## Laminating

Laminating is a process of bonding two flat surfaces together with an adhesive.

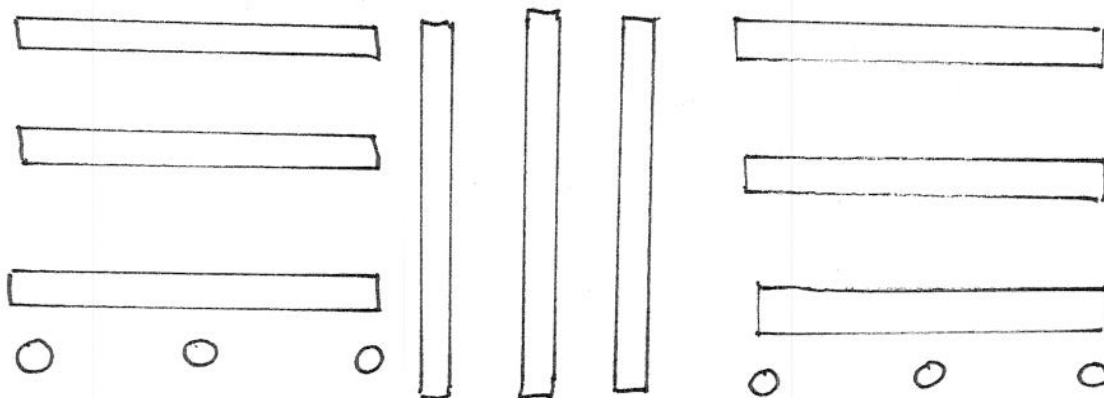
Materials needed:

1. Metallic foil
2. Base fabric
3. Fabric glue
4. Shallow container
5. Brush or stamp
6. Iron-on metallic foil
7. Press cloth

Instructions:

1. With the right side up, lay out the fabric on a flat firm surface.
2. Pour a small amount of fabric glue into a shallow container.
3. Brush or stamp the glue onto the fabric
4. Let the glue dry completely. Clean the brush with soap and water.
5. Heat the iron to the cotton setting. Place the fabric on the ironing board.
6. Cut pieces of iron-on foil large enough to cover the design area.
7. With foil side facing up, place the foil over the dried glue areas.
8. Place a press cloth on top of the foil. Press to fuse the foil, following the manufacturer's instructions.
9. Remove the press cloth. Peel the clear cellophane coating off the top of the foil.
10. Repeat these steps as desired.

Possible patterns



# Paper Piecing

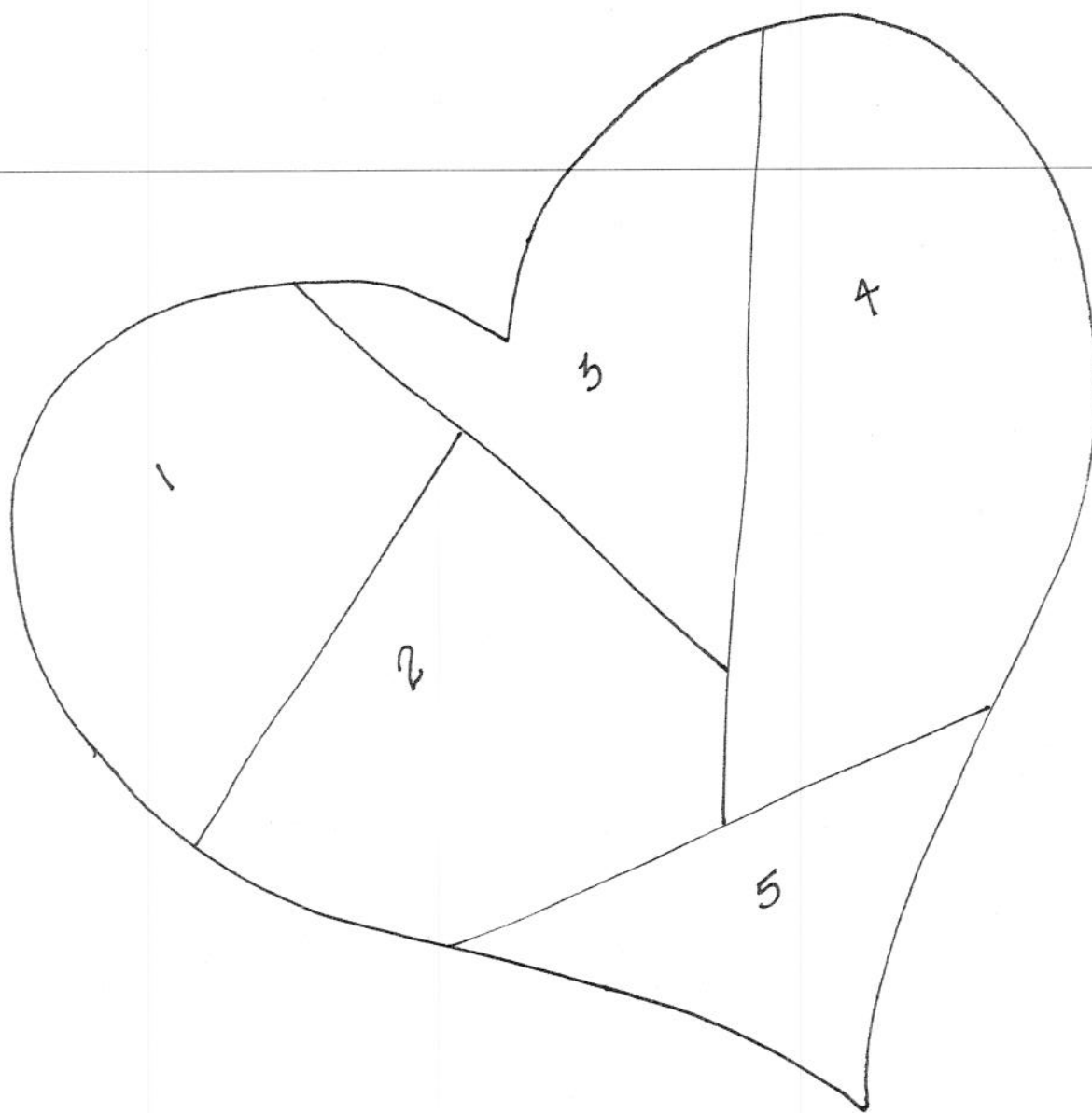
This a technique often used in quilting to create small intricate designs.

Materials needed:

1. Pattern on paper
2. Scraps of fabric to create the design
3. Glue stick

Instructions:

1. All stitching is done on the side of the paper where you can see the design
2. All fabrics are placed on the opposite side of the paper
3. All pieces are numbered and you must follow the number pattern to cover all areas and cover the seam allowances
4. Glue number one piece of fabric in place (be sure fabric extends  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch beyond the stitching lines. This is glued with wrong side of fabric to the paper.
5. Find the next piece of fabric to go in place and place it right side of fabric to the right side of the first piece
6. Pin in place
7. Turn over the paper and stitch along the line between 1 and 2
8. Turn over to fabric, and press fabric 2 so that it is flat
9. Place fabric piece 3 right side to right side, pin, turn over and stitch along the line between 2 and 3 and then press
10. Continue the above steps until all the areas are covered
11. Remove the paper from the back side of the design
12. Press
13. Finish to the desired design



## Painted Designs

Painted designs are used to add interest or fill areas.

Materials needed:

1. Fabric paint
2. Paint brushes or foam
3. Design

Instructions:

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1. You can paint on fabric that is dry or wet. The dry with give a crisp line edge while the wet fabric with give you a water colored affect.
  2. If you fabric is sheer, you can place the pattern under the fabric and follow along the lines
  3. Chalk on the design and begin to paint
  4. Wet the fabric completely if you desire a water color affect. When the paint comes in contact with the fabric it will run slightly.
  5. Create you design
  6. Lay all flat
  7. Let dry
  8. Press to set the paint
  9. Cut out you pattern

## Pin Weaving

### Materials needed:

1. Piece of cardboard
2. Piece of fusible interfacing the size of the desired project
3. An assortment of ribbons, fabric strips
4. Pins
5. Ruler

### Instructions:

1. Use ruler to mark the warp on the cardboard
2. Place interfacing on cardboard with fusing side up
3. Use a narrow ribbon or thread to create the warp lines  
Pin in place along the top and bottom of the cardboard
4. Use ribbon, strips of fabric, lace, etc. to weave in and out of the warp threads
5. Pin these strips in place
6. Fuse the weaving you have made to the interfacing piece
7. Remove the pins
8. Remove from cardboard
9. Press once again
10. Stitch around the outside edges for security
11. Cut out the pattern piece to be used

## Puzzle Weaving

Puzzle weaving is weaving two pieces of fabric together and then using a decorative stitch along the raw edges.

Materials needed:

1. Two pieces of fabric cut in strips (cut through one side and almost through the opposite side.
2. Thread to match
3. Fusible interfacing

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Instructions:

1. Cut both pieces of fabric in a wavy pattern leaving  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch at one end uncut
2. Cut piece of fusible interfacing the size of the finished pieces
3. Weave the two pieces of cut fabric together
4. Fuse them to the interfacing piece
5. Use coordinating color thread
6. Using a decorative stitch, stitch over the raw edges going side ways and lengthwise

## Reverse Dying

Reverse dying is bleaching technique used on dark colored cotton fabrics.

Materials needed:

1. Dark cotton fabric
2. Bleach - liquid
3. String, clips, pvc pipe, etc.
4. Hydrogen peroxide

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Instructions:

1. Mix liquid bleach with water in a ratio of 1 to 4 or 5
2. Fold, twist, or wrap fabric and clip or tie to hold in place
3. Put fabric in bleach solution and allow to sit until desired color
4. Remove from bleach solution and place in hydrogen peroxide solution--ratio or one to 10 parts. Allow to sit for a few minutes to stop bleaching process
5. Rinse in plain water
6. Remove all string, clips, etc and rinse again in plain water
7. Wash
8. Press fabric

## Scallop Edges Double Satin Stitch

### Materials needed:

1. Fabric
  2. Open embroidery foot
  3. Universal needle
  4. Rayon embroidery thread
  5. Spray starch
  6. Light weight stabilizer
  7. Sharp scissors
  8. Seam sealant
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This technique is a way of finishing an edge.

### Instructions:

1. Spray starch the area to be scalloped.
2. Set machine for scallop edge
3. Stitch row of scallops--leave at least a ½ inch between bottom of scallop and edge of fabric.
4. Trim off excess fabric close to thread--do not cut the threads
5. Carefully remove stabilizer
6. Coat lower edge of scallop with seam sealant
7. Allow sealant to completely dry
8. Trim again closer to the thread
9. Reset the machine for stitch and zig-zag along the edge---be sure to have needle go off the edge of fabric along lower edge-
10. Press

## Silk Ribbon Embroidery

This is a fun technique using silk ribbon and the sewing machine to embroidery a design.

Materials needed:

1. Machine embroidery foot
  2. Silk ribbon in a variety of colors and widths
  3. Fabric
  4. Light weight stabilizer
  5. Long darning needle or twisters
  6. Starch
  7. Embroidery hoop
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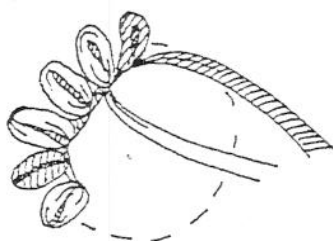
Instructions:

1. Copy pattern onto the fabric
2. Spray with starch
3. Iron
4. Put fabric into embroidery hoop
5. Slip embroidery hoop under the machine needle
6. Put on embroidery foot
7. Attach end of ribbon with a few stitches
8. Continue to follow the pattern--at corners or points you may have to use the darning needle or twisters to hold ribbon in place.
9. A pattern with instructions are included.

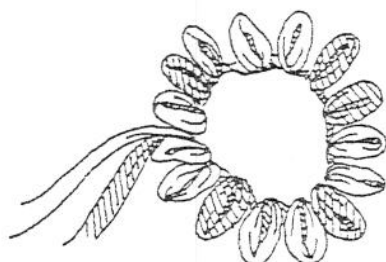
## Chrysanthemum

Choose 2mm or 4mm ribbon in a single color or in two shades of the same fall-tone hue to work a lifelike mum.

- 1 Make a 1" to 1½" circle with an air-soluble marker. Beginning at the outside of the circle, work lazy daisy stitches. If you're using two shades of ribbon, carry both along and work with them at the same time. Make a couple of stitches with one shade, then work a stitch or two with the second shade.



- 2 Continue working around the outside of the circle until it's filled.



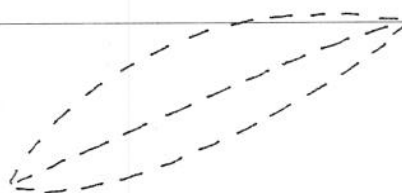
- 3 Start the next row ¼" in toward the center, overlapping the first row about halfway. Continue until the circle is filled.



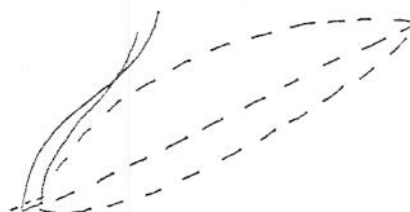
## Fern

Choose 4mm ribbon in green to make ferns. For leaves that are true to nature, remember that tender, young ferns that have had little exposure to light actually are light to medium yellow-green; mature ferns range from medium to dark green or blue-green.

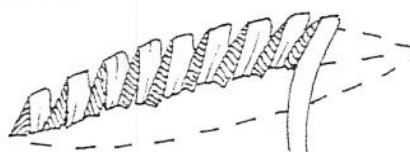
- 1 Draw a rough outline of a fern with an air-soluble marker. Accuracy isn't important.



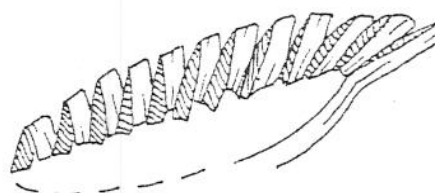
- 2 Anchor the end of the ribbon at the bottom center of the leaf.



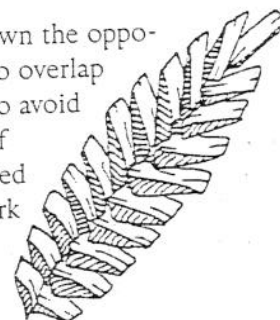
- 3 Work fern stitches to cover the first half of the leaf.



- 4 As you approach the tip of the leaf, fan out your stitches as shown.



- 5 Work your way down the opposite side, being certain to overlap your first rows slightly to avoid a gap down the center of the leaf. If your completed leaf does have a gap, work chain stitches up the center to cover it.



## *French Knots*

French knots are quick and easy to make. Use them wherever you want to add texture, accents, or fill. French knots often are done in clusters; try working a couple of them together.

① Anchor the end of the ribbon to the fabric with a few stitches. With the needle down, wind the ribbon around the needle (clockwise or counter-clockwise) about three times. Keep medium tension on the ribbon. The size of the French knot depends on the width of the ribbon and the number of times you wrap it around the needle.



② Hold the wrapped ribbon in place with tweezers and stitch right outside the knot to anchor it. You may be more comfortable working this stitch by manually turning the hand wheel.



## Pin Tucking

Pin tucks are usually used in rows. Pin tucks are small and delicate and work best on light weight fabrics.

Materials needed:

1. Twin needle in your choice of width--narrow one is usually best on light weight fabric.
  2. Fine cording--optional
  3. Matching or contrast thread
  4. Pin tuck foot
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Instructions:

1. Cut the fabric slightly larger than desired finished size or do the pin tucks before cutting out the pattern piece.
2. With the right side of the fabric up, mark the stitching line of the first pin tuck parallel to the grain line by pulling a thread or pressing a crease
3. Place the pin tuck foot and twin needle in the sewing machine. Thread each needle with a separate thread (use two spools or one spool and an extra bobbin). The threads should not cross each other at any point.
4. Set the machine for a standard straight stitch. Stitch the first pin tuck roll along the marked line.
5. Continue stitching rows as desired. Guide the adjacent pin tucks under the grooves in the foot to maintain an evenly spaced parallel lines of stitching.
6. If you wish to use cording, place the cording to the wrong side of the fabric in the groove of the pin tuck foot. Stitch as stated above.

## Edge Tucks (cross tucks)

Edge tucks are stitched on the bias of the fabric, usually 1 inch to 1 ½ inch apart. Most of the time the opposite bias is stitched and a bead is sewn at the cross over of one to the other.

Materials needed:

1. Matching thread
  2. Marking chalk and ruler
  3. Pressing cloth and iron
  4. Universal needle
  5. Small beads for hand sewing
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Instructions:

1. Mark a chalk line on a 45 degree angle to the straight of the grain
2. Measure and mark a second, third, etc.
3. Press a crease along the chalk line
4. Edge stitch the press line
5. Mark a chalk line opposite the original line--45 degree angle to the crosswise grain
6. Measure and mark a second, third, etc.
7. Press a crease along the chalk line
8. Edge stitch the press line--keep all the original stitching lines going the same way
9. Stitch a bead at the cross of each line

## Mexican Tucks (spaced tucks)

Mexican tucks give depth to a fabric.

Materials needed:

1. Chalk marker
2. Ruler

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Instructions:

1. Determine the desired finished width of the tucks and the space between
2. Mark lines as to where you would like the crease line of the tuck to be
3. Space the lines according to how you want the design to be
4. Press on the marked line by folding the fabric with the wrong sides together
5. Stitch the desired width for the tuck
6. Press all tucks the same direction
7. Mark lines perpendicular
8. Stitch along every other line to hold the tucks in place
9. Finger press the pleats to the opposite direction they were stitched
10. Stitch along these lines so pleats change directions